

13  
SPEECH

OF

HON. HORACE MANN, OF MASSACHUSETTS,

ON

THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AUGUST 17, 1852.

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. MANN said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On former occasions, I have expressed myself so much at length on the relations which the free States are made to bear to slavery, that I did not propose at this session to present any further views upon that subject. But the ban which the late Baltimore Conventions have haughtily proclaimed against free discussion; the recent, though, as I believe it will be found, the temporary silencing of my friend, Mr. SUMNER, at the other end of this Capitol, who has long desired to speak, and the still later choking down of the gentleman from Connecticut, [Mr. CLEVELAND], on this floor, have induced me to reconsider and to change my determination. I am willing to be reasoned with, and always grateful, when, for good cause, I am convinced; but when an attempt is made to take from me all option in regard to my exercise of a clear right, I find a sufficient motive for exercising that right in the mere act of disobedience.

I must begin by taking a brief retrospect. The war against Mexico was waged to rob that sister Republic of her free territory, for the sake of widening the domain and confirming the despotism of slavery. On the subject of the robbery the country was divided into Whigs and Democrats. On the wicked uses to which the territory robbed was to be put, it was divided into North and South. Fourteen out of the fifteen Northern States passed resolutions, most of them unanimously, or nearly so, in favor of excluding slavery by positive law from whatever territory we might acquire. The South did not then ask for any legislative permission to extend slavery there. But in pursuance of the doctrine of the great Ordinance of 1787, the North demanded legislative exclusion. Everybody at once foresaw

that this question would be involved in the then next Presidential election. It was remarkable, and certainly the historian will remember it, that no leading man of the South came out in favor of the Northern doctrine; for the principles of universal liberty are so congenial to the human heart, that it is difficult to conceive of five or six millions of people, in any age or country of the world, without a single man among them ready to assume the championship of freedom. It is still more remarkable that any Northern man should have ventured to espouse the cause of slavery. One, however, was found, capable of doing it. It was strange that he should have been of New England lineage. It was thrice strange, that a man educated, enriched, honored, by a people who had themselves been rescued from all the curses of slavery, and blessed with all the exuberant blessings of freedom, by the Ordinance of 1787, should have proposed to open half a continent to all the curses he and his people had escaped, and to shut it from all the blessings he and they had enjoyed. But such a man was found. General CASS thought so basely of his party at the North, that he supposed he could carry them against slavery-restriction. If so, then their union with the pro-slavery South would make a triumphant majority; and hence the well-known Nicholson letter. But that letter recoiled upon him, and in the canvass of 1848 overthrew him. The original temptation, however, still remained, and acted with increased force. The South stood firm. They were a compact body of Abolitionists, though the thing they desired to abolish was human freedom. They spoke out plainly, and offered their support and their votes to the Northern man, Whig or Democrat, who would most thoroughly bend or break himself to their purposes. Under the lead of General CASS, many of the Democratic party were seduced, and they deserted. But

until the 7th of March, 1850, no Northern Whig yielded to their enticements. On that day, however, Mr. Webster, in the Senate of the United States, offered to abandon the Ordinance of 1787—then known as the "Wilmot Proviso." He offered to give an additional slave State to Texas beyond what she could claim under the unconstitutional resolutions of annexation. He offered to support, "to the fullest extent," that most atrocious Fugitive Slave bill, then before the Senate, by which all custom-house officers, and the seventeen thousand postmasters of the United States, were to be made judges, and to be invested with power over human liberty, and to have, each one of them, not local, but unlimited jurisdiction throughout the United States; and he offered to give \$200,000,000 to fortify and perpetuate the institution of slavery, by removing from the Southern States the dreaded element of the free colored population. Two hundred millions of dollars—a profusion and a prodigality magnificently Websterian! I am here only referring to facts which, as everybody knows, have become history.

Here, then, we see that two conspicuous leaders of the Northern Democrats and Whigs planted themselves upon Southern ground. When the race for the Presidency consisted in adhesion to the Slave Power alone, it was not to be expected that the competitors would be few. Mr. Buchanan forthwith caused it to be understood, that, on his part, he was willing to run the line of 36 deg. 30 min.—the Missouri Compromise line, so-called—through to the Pacific ocean, and surrender to slavery all upon its southern side. Mr. Dallas, late Vice President under Mr. Polk, in his letter to Mr. Bryan, of Texas, went further, and proposed to incorporate the Compromise measures and the Fugitive Slave Law itself, into the Constitution, so as to put their repeal beyond the power of a Northern majority. Senator Douglas followed. He sugared his pill. He told the South, that we have cotton lands, and rice lands, and tobacco lands enough; but alas! said he, we want more lands for sugar; by which the South perfectly understood that if they would make him President, the annexation of Cuba should be their reward. This is the same gentleman who has lately said, in a secret session of the Senate, that if the Sandwich Islands should be annexed to this country, and a question should arise about excluding slavery from them by law, he would vote against it. During all this time affairs were ripening for the Baltimore nominations. Mr. Fillmore offered to the South the Army and Navy, to catch a poor fugitive, where only a constable's posse was needed. Mr. Webster trumped up false treasons by scores against Northern Anti-Slavery men. The President travelled North and South, making speeches redolent of pro-slavery. The Secretary travelled still

more, *milting* pro-slavery letters and speeches wherever he went. Certainly the reason why any of the above-named parties did not get a nomination at Baltimore, was not because of what the law calls *laches*, or "want of reasonable diligence" on their part.

I come now to the Baltimore Conventions themselves, which were held in June last. Every one knows that the great question of human slavery had a controlling influence in those bodies, and determined their results. With a vast majority of their members, pro-slavery or anti-slavery was the one overmastering motive and end. In the Democratic Convention, the pro-slavery sentiment was nearly unanimous. Its members had been sold into that perdition by the lust of money or the ambition for office. Yet even they were held in check by the apprehended thunders of the voice of the people behind them. If they did not recoil from the crime, they feared its punishment. In the Whig Convention, the men who were ready to sacrifice honor, duty, religion, to the demands of slavery, were a large majority, and might have nominated their most ultra pro-slavery candidate on the first ballot. They could have effected this just as easily as they effected their pro-slavery organization, and appointed a committee on credentials who excluded anti-slavery men, and a committee on resolutions who accepted a Southern platform, prepared for them beforehand by Southern hands. But these Bel-hazars, too, like him of old, saw the handwriting upon the wall, and they knew that, with such a candidate, they were doomed to utter and remorseless defeat before the people. In both Conventions, however, the spirit of slavery was so strong and so badly brave, as to carry the resolutions I am about to read. The Democratic Convention resolved to

"—abide by and adhere to a faithful execution of the acts known as the Compromise measures, settled by the last Congress—the act for reclaiming fugitive slaves from service or labor included."

And further, they

"Resolved, That the Democratic party will resist all attempts at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made."

And the Whig Convention

"Resolved, That the series of acts of the Thirty-first Congress, commonly known as the Compromise or adjustment, (the act for the recovery of fugitives from labor included,) are received and acquiesced in by the Whigs of the United States, as a final settlement, in principle and substance, of the subjects to which they relate." \* \* \* "And we deprecate all further agitation of the questions thus settled, as dangerous to our peace, and will discountenance all efforts to continue or renew such agitation, whenever, wherever, or however made."

Now, what an outrage is this! Does not our Constitution provide against "abridging the freedom of speech or of the press?" Why secure this freedom in the organic law, if the

tyranny of a social law can abolish it? Of what value is that provision in the Constitution, which secures the free exercise of religion, if social intolerance and bigotry, acting in an unlegalized way, can destroy it? Yet, here are two Conventions, utterly unknown to any of our Constitutions, whether State or National, invested with no powers, Legislative, Judicial, or Executive, coming together for a day, and then scattered and sunk in individual obscurity; yet lifting their pigmy voices against the mightiest impulses of the human heart, against history and providence, against the fiat and the Spirit of God himself; resolving that mankind shall be dumb in regard to the greatest of human wrongs; and resolving, also, that a law passed by a Republican Government, yet as barbarous and tyrannical as was ever made by any despotism, shall be consecrated in its wickedness, and remain eternal.

Two Baltimore Conventions, assuming to quench the eternal spirit of liberty—that spirit which was a part of the inspiration of the prophets of old, when they commanded the tyrants of the earth to “undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free;” that spirit which gave all its heroism and splendor to the classic land of Greece, and made its memories immortal; that spirit which gave to Rome its colossal proportions of physical and intellectual grandeur; that spirit which, in the darkest night of the world’s history, climbed Alpine heights and sheltered itself in the fastnesses of Alpine mountains, inaccessible to tyrants; which, at another time, found protection within the dykes of Holland, barring out the rage of the ocean, and the more remorseless rage of despotic men; that spirit which has given to England, and to English history, all their undisputed claims to renown and to the gratitude of mankind, and which, when persecuted and driven from England, crossed the Atlantic, spread itself over this open continent, and having been nursed by more than two hundred years of struggle and discipline, now bids defiance to the world—this Godlike spirit of liberty, immortal, invulnerable, and indestructible, two ephemeral Baltimore Conventions undertake to ban! Xerxes chaining the Hellespont was wisdom personified compared with them; aye, it would be too dignified and honorable an illustration to compare them to two old male Mrs. Partingtons, mopping out the Atlantic!

Why did not these insane men propose to do something which is at least conceivable? Why did they not propose to turn back the order of physical events, rather than to violate the more infrangible and irresistible laws of moral progress? Why did they not order the oak back into the acorn, or the bird back into its shell, or the earth itself back into its first geological epoch, rather than to order the enfranchised spirit of the nineteenth century back into the

gloom and bondage of the dark ages of the world? Why did they not lift up the wand of their arrogance and audacity towards Areturus and the Pleiades, and attempt to move round the constellations of the heavens as you would move round the hands on the dial-plate of a clock? Such hallucinations would be at least within the limits of human conception, and would therefore be free from the folly and atheism of attempting to stifle the voice of freemen discussing freedom.

Sir, to resolve that the slavery question shall be discussed nevermore, is to resolve the memories of all the heroes, and martyrs, and saints, whose names make all the bright pages of human history, into eternal oblivion. It is to resolve the history of the American Revolution, and of all its actors, into forgetfulness. It is to resolve the noblest faculties and aspirations of the human soul into non-existence. Under any fair and legitimate construction of such a resolve, it embraces the whole meaning and force of that infamously celebrated decree of the French Convention, that “There is no God.” I do not say this by way of rhetorical embellishment, or to impart greater emphasis to a period. I say it because it is literally and strictly true; for the just and benevolent God who sits upon the throne of the Universe must Himself be silenced, before the cry against the cruelty and injustice of slavery can be quelled.

Let us see, for a moment, what is the nature of the burden these Baltimore Conventions have taken upon themselves. By forbidding us to speak upon a given subject, they compel us to examine that subject, and see if duty does not require us to speak upon it. They leave us no option: and if the discussion shall prove unpalatable, they may thank themselves for provoking it. Let me inquire, then, whether it be not demonstrable that the relation of slavery between man and man comprehends, perpetuates, multiplies, and aggravates, all forms of crime which it is possible for a human being to commit. Is the stealing, even of a shilling, a crime? Slavery steals all that man can call his own; and is not the whole greater than a part? Is robbery, which is defined to be the taking of any part of a man’s goods, “from his person, or in his presence, against his will, by violence, or putting him in fear,” a crime? Slavery answers the exact definition of the law books; for it is by violence and by putting in bodily fear that a master ravishes from his slave all his earnings, and all his ability to earn, from birth till death. And again, I say, is not the whole greater than a part? \* Is the destruction of any one man’s house by fire a crime? How much greater the crime of preventing millions of men from having a house

\* President Edwards said: “While you hold negroes in slavery you do exceeding wrong, and that in a higher degree than if you committed common robbery or theft.”

they can call their own? Is concubinage a crime? In this Union, all the adult portion of more than three millions of people are now forced to live in a state of concubinage. Is it a crime to abandon innocent females to the lusts of guilty men, without the slightest protection of law? In this country, a million and a half of females constantly are so abandoned, and the rearing of dark-skinned beauties for the harems of republican sultans is a systematized and legalized business. Is it a crime to break asunder all the ties of human affection, to tear children from the arms of their parents, and parents from each other? There is no conjugal or parental or filial affection among more than three millions of people in this land which is sacred from such violation. Is it a crime to let murder and all other offences go unpunished? There is no form of crime which a white man may not commit against a slave with entire impunity, if he will take the precaution to let none but slaves witness it. The darkening of the intellect, the shrouding of a soul in the gloom of ignorance, the forbidding of a spirit which God made in His own image to commune with its Maker, is more than a common crime—it is sacrilege—it is the sacrilege of sacrileges. It is a crime which no other nation on this earth—civilized, heathen, or barbarian—ever committed to the extent that it is committed here. And yet this locking of the temple of knowledge against a whole race, this drawing of an impenetrable veil between the soul of man and his Maker, this rebellion against all that God has done to reveal Himself to His offspring through the works of nature and the revelations of His providence, is enacted into laws, guarded by terrible penalties, and administered by men who call themselves Christians, as though Jesus Christ could have subscribed or executed such laws. It is a crime unspeakable to deprive men of the Gospel, and of freedom to interpret it; but the slave code does this, by withholding letters from the slave, and thus postpones the true enfranchisement and salvation of his soul to another life, when he can no longer be of any use to his earthly master. Would it be a crime to practice some demoniac art, by which the growth of body and limbs should be arrested in childhood, and the victims should be left with only infantile powers to contend with cold, nakedness, hunger, and all the hosts of pain? Then it is an infinitely greater crime to inflict weakness and ignorance upon those glorious faculties of the mind, by which alone its possessor can solve the mighty problems of future destiny, of eternity, and of the soul's weal or woe. I repeat, then, that the worst forms of all the crimes which a human being can commit—theft, robbery, murder, adultery, incest, sacrilege, and whatever else there is that inflicts wide-wasting ruin upon society, and brings the souls of men to perdition—the

word slavery is the synonym of them all. Analyze slavery, and you will find its ingredients to consist of every crime. Define any crime, and you will find it to be incorporated in slavery, and aggravated by it.

As the complex and infinite meaning of the word God cannot be adequately understood, until you analyze it, and divide and subdivide it, and give to it the thousand names of omnipotence, and omniscience, and omnipresence, of infinite justice, and holiness, and benevolence, of all sanctities, and verities, and benignities, of all energies and beauties, of all wisdom and all law; so when you penetrate and lay open the infinite meaning of the word SLAVERY, it resolves itself into all crimes and all cruelties, all debasements and all horrors. The telescope of the astronomer resolves the stardust of the universe into refulgent systems that glorify their Maker; the telescope of the moralist resolves the Tartaric cloud of slavery into all the impieties and wickednesses that deform humanity.

Now, between these two great antagonisms, between God and the Right on one side, and Slavery and the Wrong on the other, these two Baltimore Conventions have chosen the latter. They have said to Evil, be thou my God. They have voted to annul God's laws. They have resolved that discussions on the great question of human freedom, which involves the whole question of free agency and human accountability, and the entire plan and order of the Divine government, shall be silenced.

So much for the intrinsic nature of slavery, which the Baltimore Conventions have wedded as their bride. Now let us look at some of the collateral wrongs, the self-stultification and atheism, for which slavery in this country is responsible, and which those Conventions, therefore, have sanctioned and ratified, and declared their purpose to continue.

When a nation is born into the world, possessing the attributes and prerogatives of nationality, it is the moral duty of existing nations to welcome it into the brotherhood of the human family. Such recognition of a new sovereignty tends to increase commerce, to forefend war, and to diffuse the blessings of knowledge, science, and the arts. It becomes, therefore, a duty. Yet, what is the posture in which this Government stands to Liberia and Hayti? Great Britain, with France, Prussia, and other continental nations, has acknowledged their existence. We refuse, and stand aloof. And this for no other reason than to gratify a colorphobia, which dreads equity as the hydrophobia dreads water. Writers on national law call nations a moral entity. We find color in a moral entity, and repudiate its claims. Contrast the alacrity of this Government in recognising slaveholding Texas, with its utter refusal, for a quarter of a century in one case, and for half a century in the other,

to recognise the Free Soil Governments of Liberia and Hayti. This is one of the collateral wrongs growing out of the repugnance of slavery to do justice to the colored man anywhere; and the taint of this moral disease at the South spreads its infection over the North.

Mark a great sign and proof of depravation in the public intellect, originating in the same prolific source of wrong. The blasphemous argument has been put forth, that God fore-ordained and instituted African slavery amongst us for the ultimate and consequential purpose of carrying civilization and Christianity into Africa. Not only have the logic of the politician and the ethics of the moralist been corrupted into this falsity, but even the divine, with the preservative power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in his hands, has endeavored to reconcile our people to the crimes and the curses of slavery by this impious argument. They maintain that God has looked with complacency upon all the atrocities of the African slave trade; that the groans and agonies of the Middle Passage have ascended as a sweet-smelling savor before His throne; that He has seen with approval, within the last three centuries, forty millions of native Africans—yes, sir, forty millions, for that is the estimated number—almost double the entire population of this country, and more than one-third more than the present population of Great Britain and Ireland put together—of native Africans, torn from their homes and driven through gates of fire and realms of torture, to bondage and to death; that, during all this period, He has looked with delight upon the most frightful forms of war, the pillage and conflagration of cities, and wholesale murder, and man-stealing worse than murder, not only raging along the eastern and the western shores of that devoted continent, but at times extending their ravages and havoc twelve or thirteen hundred miles inland; and that His benign providence is still fulfilled by the successful prosecution of the slave trade; though for every thousand human victims in Africa, it is estimated that only three hundred finally reach their earth-born hell of Cuban or Brazilian sugar or cotton fields. Now, that God sent out slaves from Africa to America, at this inconceivable cost of crime on the one hand, and of suffering on the other; that His providence has raised up hosts of fiends in the shape of men, century after century, for the roundabout purpose of carrying Christianity and civilization into Africa, in some remote age, we know not when; this is the blasphemous doctrine we are made to hear from the political rostrum, the lecture-room, and, incredible to relate, from the pulpit itself!

Now, I say, sir, that to impute any such cruel-hearted and simpleton-minded scheme to our All-wise and benignant Father in Heaven, is wild and wanton impiety and blasphemy. No parallel can be found in heathen mythology

where such short-sighted folly and crime have been charged upon any of the bloody gods of all their pantheons. The very hypothesis is founded on an inversion of history, and it presupposes for its conception a perversion of the human intellect.

The system of enslaving Africans was commenced in ancient times by the Egyptians and the Arabs, and carried on in later periods by the Moors. Was that for the sake of carrying Christianity into Africa? In modern times, the same system, with unspeakable aggravations, has been prosecuted by all the commercial nations of Europe and of this continent. From time immemorial, therefore, Africa has been made the hunting ground of the man stealer. For thirty or forty centuries malice and mammon have wreaked their vengeance upon that devoted land. All crimes and calamities—conflagration, pestilence, brutality, and havoc—have been poured over it in crimson floods. To confine our view within the last three centuries alone, who can adequately conceive the effects of robbing a continent of forty millions of people in so brief a period, with all the wars, devastations, cruelties, and treacheries, which stand out as the terrific incidents of such a stupendous crime? Nor has this storm of wrath expended itself upon the coasts alone. As I said before, these man-hunting forays and ravages have swept inland for twelve or thirteen hundred miles—further than from the Atlantic to the Mississippi—as far as from the Gulf of Mexico to the great lakes. Such has been the diffusive character of this continent-overflowing crime. And it is in this that we find the cause of Africa's degradation, not the hopes of her redemption. The white man has created the very barbarism which he now impiously uses before Heaven as an excuse for the crime of creating it. Foreign intercourse engrafted the full-developed vices and crimes of civilization upon that barbarian stock. The sins of the white races created the very necessity for that civilization, which, as they now profanely contend, the further sin of slavery is to supply. The cause of African barbarism was slavery; and, according to the argument, the remedy is slavery. The white man clutches the profits, while he throws off the wickedness upon God. But what kind of a God does he give to the black man, who suffers equally from both disease and remedy?

Mr. MASON. I desire to ask the gentleman from Massachusetts a single question. I wish to call his attention to the fact, which I learn from the history of the race, that the three millions of negroes in the United States, who are slaves, are in a better condition, physically and morally, than any three millions of the African race that have existed since we have any authentic accounts of them. I ask the gentleman whether he does not consider the improvement in the moral and physical condition of

these negroes sufficient to counterbalance the evils which necessarily grow out of the institution of slavery?

Mr. MANN. That is a fair question, and I am ready to answer it. According to the laws of population, which govern barbarous nations, Africa has as many inhabitants now, as it would have if the robber had never invaded her domain, and stolen away her children. Among barbarous tribes, the population presses upon the means of subsistence. It tends to increase faster than the means of subsistence increase. Remove a part of the great family from the table whence they are supplied, and their vacant places will be soon filled by others, according to the laws of natural increase. As to them, the Malthusian theory holds good. Therefore we have not diminished the number of suffering, degraded, and demoralized beings in Africa, by one unit, in consequence of taking a portion of their ancestors from them.

Mr. MASON. What would have been the condition of these three millions of negroes, had not their ancestors been brought to this country? Would they not, by degradation and starvation, have gone out of existence?

Mr. MANN. They would never have come into existence; but their places amongst us would have been occupied by a white population of our own race, or of some race kindred to our own. Other men would have been substituted for them—whites for blacks, freemen for slaves.

Mr. MASON. Are not our slaves better off, both morally and physically, than any three millions of negroes ever were in Africa?

Mr. MANN. Before the gentleman institutes a comparison between the moral and physical condition of the black race here and in Africa, he must see what has caused their degradation at home. Remember the awful facts that forty millions of the best of them—selected men and women—within the last three centuries, have been torn from home, and that these ravages have not been confined to the eastern and western shores, but have pierced inland; so that the country has bled at every pore—at every vital organ—and conceive, if mortal imagination can conceive, what effect this of itself must have in making and keeping a people barbarian. And, after all, what has been the social condition of the interior tribes, who have had less communication and been less corrupted by the “lower law” nations? Travellers inform us that, generally speaking, they are a mild, docile, peaceable people—not aggressive and predatory, land-robbing and man-hunting, like the British in India, or ourselves on this continent. They are contented, companionable, home-loving, and unwarlike. Some of the early Christian Fathers, as the gentleman must well know, were Africans; and there is every reason to believe that Christianity would have spread southward from the

Mediterranean into Africa, quite as fast as northward into Europe, and would even have encountered less opposition from the stern and unyielding nature of the people, but for the demoralizing elements injected through every vein and artery of their system by the stronger nations of the earth.

Mr. MASON. I think the gentlemen might give many other reasons than the one which he has named, why the Africans have not become more civilized. I think he might find reasons for it in the history of that race for the last thousand years, and in the history of the missionaries who have gone amongst them. The Catholics have been there for several hundred years, and have established churches, but have always abandoned them; although I see by the last reports that they are trying it again. I think the gentleman could find a reason for it in the nature of the black man, as made by his Creator. He is not capable or susceptible of any of these qualifications in any other state than in a state of slavery. The three millions who have been reduced to slavery in this country have been placed in a better condition than any of the race have been known to exist in. The gentleman admits that fact.

Mr. MANN. Has the gentleman read Dr. Shaw's Travels in Africa?

Mr. MASON. I have read some extracts from Dr. Shaw's Travels.

Mr. MANN. Dr. Shaw relates the manner in which the western Moors of Africa had traded, “*from time immemorial*,” as he says, with the native tribes on the banks of the Niger, without ever having violated the charter which prescribed the mode of traffic:

“At a certain time of the year,” says Dr. Shaw, “they [the Moors] make this journey in a numerous caravan, carrying along with them coral and glass beads, bracelets of horn, knives, scissors, and such like trinkets. When they arrive at the place appointed, which is on such a day of the moon, they find in the evening several different heaps of gold dust, lying at a small distance from each other, against which the Moors place so many of their trinkets as they judge will be taken in exchange for them. If the Nigrilians the next morning approve of the bargain, they take up the trinkets and leave the gold dust, or else make some deduction from the latter. In this manner they transact their exchange, without seeing one another, or without the least instance of dishonesty or perfidiousness on either side.”\*

Now, contrast this picture with the honesty of the black men in this country, or of the white men either. Contrast it with the fact of our infinite mercantile frauds, from the forgery of custom-house invoices, through adulteration and false weights and false measures, down to the shower of lies which is so often rained upon his goods by the last retailer, affirming them to be what he knows they are not, and make

\* Travels and Observations relating to several parts of Barbary and the Levant. Dr. Shaw was English chaplain at Algiers in the reign of George I.

your own comparisons as to what the race is here, and what it might have been, but for man-stealing, there.

Mr. MASON. The gentleman must not understand me as being an enemy of the African race; but I look upon them as being an entirely different people. If the effect of civilization is to make men dishonest, we had better not try to civilize the Africans.

Mr. MANN. And now, as the argument is that God ordained American slavery as the means of civilizing and Christianizing Africa, let us see what kind and style of civilization and Christianity it is which our example proffers them. The most conspicuous features in the civilization of this country are, that it holds more than three millions of human beings in ruthless bondage; that the spirit which governs the country has lately annexed slaveholding Texas, because it was slaveholding; that it has despoiled Mexico of her richest provinces, in the hope of making them slaveholding also; that it has attempted to rob Spain of Cuba, and still means to do it; that two millions of our white children are growing up without schools; that intemperance is a common vice among the people; and not an uncommon one among rulers; and that, in our cities, the rich and the strong live upon the poor and the weak, almost as much as in the waters on which they are situated, the great fishes eat up the little ones. When some one asked John Jacob Astor how so many men found business in the city of New York, his reply was, "They cheats one another, and they calls that business." The wealthy have more houses than they can live in, the costliest furniture, wardrobes, equipages, libraries, and all that art or nature can produce; while thousands of the children of the same Heavenly Father, around them, are houseless and shelterless, naked and hungry. Such is the type of the civilization which our example proffers to Africa.

And how do our "lower law" apologists for slavery dispose of the American coastwise slave trade among the facts of their impious argument? In 1820, Virginia had a slave population 425,153. According to the ratio of increase in the whole slave population of the United States, her slaves, in 1850, should have amounted to 800,000. But the actual number was only 472,523; that is, more than 300,000 less than the proportionate natural increase. This number, or at least most of them, must have been sent to the South for sale.

In 1833, Professor Dew, of William and Mary College, said that Virginia exported her own native population, at the rate of 6,000, for which she received \$1,200,000, annually.

So in 1820, the slave population of Maryland was 107,398. Making all due abatements for manumissions and escapes, this number should have increased, in thirty years, to nearly 200,000. But in 1850 it was only 90,368. The

difference has gone to the remorseless South. And doubtless, in most of these cases, members of families have been torn asunder—man from woman, parents from children.

The same slave trade is carried on from North Carolina. The slaves are borne from the less rigorous bondage of the Northern slave States, to a more unrelenting prison-house. *Is this also in furtherance of God's gracious purpose of spreading Christianity and civilization over Africa?*

Our Christianity secures the Trial by Jury, and the Great Writ of Freedom, to ourselves, but disfranchises and outlaws, and puts beyond the pale of human sympathy, an entire race of a different color. But when have we sent to Africa a colony of Americans to teach them the arts? When a Las Casas to teach them Christianity? The missionaries we have sent them have been rum and fire-arms. The arts we have taught them have been those of treachery and man stealing. In what we took, and in what we gave, we inflicted upon them a double curse. And yet Doctors of Divinity and political aspirants dare tell us that God looked down through the vista of the ages, and, seeing this frightful form of civilization afar off, with all its attendant ministers of vengeance, and woe, and death, bade the gory demon advance!

Mr. POLK. (interrupting.) I ask the gentleman from Massachusetts to paint me the condition of the black race in the non-slaveholding States.

Mr. MANN. At the proper time I will attend to that subject. It does not belong to my present course of argument.

Mr. POLK. I insist upon it now, sir.

[Loud cries of "Order!" "Order!"]

Mr. MANN. If the gentleman will show me what right he has to insist upon it, I will obey him; but not until he does.

Mr. POLK. I consider the attack which the gentleman is making upon the South as unworthy of a member upon this floor.

[Renewed cries of "Order!"]

Mr. MANN. The gentleman from Tennessee must not, in the first place, forbid our discussing the subject of slavery—

Mr. POLK. I forbid nothing but slanders upon the institutions of the South.

[Shouts of "Order!"]

Mr. MANN. And then, when we get a chance to discuss it, undertake to determine upon what topics discussion shall be had.

Mr. POLK. I say that a gentleman upon this floor has no right to perpetrate such vile slanders upon the South, when he does not hold himself personally responsible—

[Loud shouts of "Order!"]

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Tennessee is out of order, and must take his seat.

Mr. HARRIS, of Alabama. I rise to a ques-

tion of order, and I wish to have the question decided. The gentleman from Massachusetts has now been, for the last three quarters of an hour, assailing the established institutions of one half of this Union—existing institutions, existing under the Constitution of the United States. I ask if that be in order? I call him to order upon the ground that it is not in order, and I want the question decided by the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will state that the latitude of debate upon these bills is very great, and it is very difficult indeed—

Mr. POLK, (interrupting.) I would ask the Chair one other question. Is it right that the gentleman from Massachusetts should assail an institution of the South, with which we are all connected, in a manner that is insulting in its character, when he does not hold himself responsible for his insults?

Mr. FOWLER. I rise to another question of order. My question of order is this, that when the gentleman from Massachusetts is using his privilege, he shall be allowed to go on, and that this House shall sustain the Chair in allowing him to go forward with his remarks.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MANN] will proceed.

Mr. POLK. He has no right to state falsehoods about one-half of the nation—

[Shouts of "Order!"]

Mr. MEADE. I call for the reading of the 31st rule.

Mr. JOHN W. HOWE. I call for the reading of the two platforms. [Great Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair has decided that the gentleman from Massachusetts is in order, and he will proceed.

Mr. MEADE. The 31st rule prohibits all discussion of this question in this House, except upon a proposition to which it is germane. I ask for the reading of that rule.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair has already decided that the gentleman from Massachusetts is not out of order, in pursuing this course of remark. If that decision is not satisfactory, the Chair trusts some gentleman will appeal from it.

Mr. HARRIS, of Alabama. I appeal from that decision.

Mr. CAMPBELL, of Ohio. Very well. Let us try it on the question of order presented by those who have been in the habit of dragging every possible question into debate here. We will see whether there are not other places in this country besides Tennessee—other parts of the Union besides the South.

Mr. POLK. I take that responsibility, and appeal from the decision of the Chair. I hold the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CAMPBELL] equally responsible; and I pronounce him the same vile slanderer as the gentleman from Massachusetts, who makes these charges.

[Cries of "Order!"]

The 31st rule was then read by the Clerk as follows:

"When any member is about to speak in debate, or deliver any matter to the House, he shall rise from his seat, and respectfully address himself to 'Mr. Speaker,' and shall confine himself to the question under debate, and avoid personality."

Mr. MANN continued: Mr. Chairman, for myself, I do not regret this interruption. But I did not think it possible, even after the Baltimore edict had gone forth, even after a Senator had been silenced at the other end of the Capitol, [Mr. SUMNER,] and also a Representative on this floor, [Mr. CLEVELAND,] because they proposed to speak on the subject of slavery—I did not think it possible, when I was in the legitimate course of making a speech, and was rightfully entitled to the floor, and was in order, that a dozen men should start up here, so hostile to hearing the words of truth and soberness, when spoken in relation to the institution of slavery, as to try to gag me down.

I had spoken of the cause of Africa's demoralization and barbarism. I had spoken of the type of civilization which it is proposed to offer her as an example, and I had shown how impious was the argument which would attribute to the All-good and the All-powerful, such a tardy, cruel, circuitous method of effecting her regeneration; and which, after waiting through slow centuries of agony and crime, would send her such a civilization by such messengers! I have only to add, that before I would accept any such theology as this, I would seek my creed among the old mythologies of the heathen. In this hideous doctrine, which slavery has now forced upon that public intellect which it had before depraved, there is material sufficient for eight *anti* "Bridgewater Treatises," all *dis*-proving the wisdom, the power, and the goodness of God.

Another obvious consequence of the existence of slavery in this country, has been the criminal remissness of the Government in suppressing the slave trade on the coast of Africa. We have refused to enter into treaties with European Governments to secure so desirable an end; and authentic documents, developing the horrors of this traffic, and proving American-built merchant ships to be engaged in it, have laid on the files of the State Department for years, and through whole Presidential terms, unnoticed. On such an appalling crime as this, whose suppression has been within our reach, the national conscience has been benumbed into torpidity and paralysis, by the existence of slavery amongst us.

Look at another instance in which slavery has depraved the popular sentiment of the country. Under the generous and chivalric lead of Mr. Clay, with what enthusiasm did we hail the birth of the South American Republics! What hosannas did we shout forth for the emancipation of Greece! How deep



the sigh of the nation's heart when Poland struggled in her death-agony and breathed her last! Even so late as 1848, this Congress sent resolutions congratulating France on her Magna Charta of "liberty, equality, and fraternity." In one of the European revolutions of that year, on the banks of the Danube, a young man sprang, at a single bound, from comparative obscurity to universal fame. His heroism organized armies. His genius created resources. He abolished the factitious order of nobility, but his exalted soul poured the celestial ichor of the gods through ten millions of peasant hearts, and made them truly noble. Though weak in all but the energies of the soul, yet it took two mighty empires to break down his power. When he sought refuge in Turkey, the sympathies of the civilized world attended his exile. He was invited to our shores. He came, and spoke as man never before spake. It was Byron's wish that he could condense all the raging elements of his soul

"into one word,

And that one word were lightning."

Kossuth found what Byron in vain prayed for, for all his words were lightning; not bolts, but a lambent flame, which he poured into men's hearts—not to kill, but to animate with a more exalted and a diviner life. In cities where the vast population went forth to hail him, in academic halls, where the cultivation of eloquence and knowledge is made the business of life; in those great gathering places, where the rivers of people have their confluence, he was addressed by the most eloquent men whom this nation of orators could select. More than five hundred of our selectest speakers spoke speeches before him which they had laboriously prepared from history and embellished from the poets, with severe toil, by the long-trimmed lamp. Save in two or three peculiar cases, his unprepared and improvised replies, in eloquence, in pathos, in dignity, in exalted sentiment, excelled them all. For their most profound philosophy, he gave them deeper generalizations; he out-circuited their widest ranges of thought, and in the whole sweep of the horizon revealed glories they had never seen; and while they checked their ambitious flight beneath the sun, he soared into the empyrean, and brought down, for the guidance of men's hearts and deeds, the holy light that shines from the face of God. Though all their splendors were gathered to a focal point, they were outshone by his effulgence. His immortal theme was Liberty—liberty for the nations, liberty for the people. Once that word was enough to electrify men's hearts, aye, to make the stones in the streets cry out for joy. But, by the compromises of 1850, and this infernal Slave Law, and the efforts of political leaders and parties to sustain them, the people had been demoralized; their sentiments had been debauched. To thousands and hundreds of thousands the cry of the rights of man had become an odious cry. To hail liberty in

the East, while we were propagating slavery in the West; to receive with honors a fugitive from Austrian bondage, while our hands were thrusting back fugitives into a tenfold direr bondage at the South, were contradictions so palpable and flagrant that even partisan blindness could not but see them. Kossuth owed labor and service to Francis Joseph of Austria, just as much as Thomas Sims owed it to John Potter of Georgia. Why should the one be cheered and the other chained? Why should the Mississippi bring Kossuth here for freedom, and the Acorn carry Sims back to bondage? Kossuth had committed treason, ten thousand times over, against the House of Hapsburg. Why should he be sheltered in our arms from the penalties of treason, while the Government here sets all the foul ministers of the law to make constructive treasons for the punishment of innocent men? Kossuth had rebelled against Austria, and had caused the death of tens of thousands of her subjects. Why should he be screened behind a rampart of American hearts, while those who killed Gorsuch, under the law of self-preservation, and in defence of life, liberty, and home, should be ignominiously hung on the gallows? These were questions that no deafness could avoid hearing, and, when heard, no sophistry, could answer. Freedom, one, slavery is its antipode, and therefore the protection of the fugitive Kossuth and the surrender of the fugitive slave could never be reconciled. Hence it was that, in public assemblies, among public men, throughout the newspaper press, wherever the spirit of slavery predominated, there Kossuth was denounced. I say, among public men. Accuracy directs me to add, that, among our public men, there were a few honorable exceptions, of which Mr. Webster was one. But, as to the newspapers, if you saw one to-day, filled with the veriest servility towards the slave power, you might be sure that it would revile and defame Kossuth to-morrow. Or, if you saw one column reeking with abuse of Kossuth, you would be sure to find a pro-slavery poem in the next. Even at the door of this House, after Kossuth had been invited to the Capitol, he was stopped and insulted. Some of the more simple ones avowed their reasons. They said, if we sympathize with the oppressed in the person of a Hungarian now, we may next be called upon to sympathize with the oppressed in the persons of three millions of Africans. Compare the triumphal "Progress" of Kossuth through the free States, such as no Roman consul, returning from foreign conquests and laden with spoils, ever knew, with the feeble, and grudging, and stinted honors paid him in the land of bondage. Slavery made the contrast. Almost without exception, the Northern opponents of Kossuth were sympathizers with Southern slavery, and therefore with Francis Joseph and Nicholas.

The person of this truly noble Hungarian

has departed from our shores; but he has left a spirit behind him that will never die. He has scattered seeds of liberty and truth, whose flowers and fruit will become honors and glories amaranthine. I trust he goes to mingle in sterner scenes; I trust he goes to battle for the right, not with the tongue and pen alone, but with all the weapons that freedom can forge and wield. Before the Divine Government I bow in reverence and adoration; but it tasks all my philosophy and all my religion to believe that the despots of Europe have not excoriated their irresponsible and cruel tyrannies too long. It seems too long since Charles was brought to the axe, and Louis to the guillotine. Liberty, humanity, justice, demand more modern instances. The time has fully come when the despot, not the patriot, should feel the executioner's steel or lead. The time has fully come when, if the oppressed demand their inalienable and Heaven-born rights of their oppressors, and this demand is denied, that they should say, not exactly in the language of Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty or give me death;" that was noble language in its day, but we have now reached an advanced stage in human development, and the time has fully come when the oppressed, if their rights are forcibly denied them, should say to the oppressor:

I have said that one of the collateral consequences of slavery in this country has been to deprave, corrupt, and debauch public sentiment. When, before, in the history of the world, has it ever happened that the leading men of a Republic, and the leading organs of public sentiment supported by their wealth, have become abettors and champions of slavery? Yet such is the morally hideous spectacle our country now exhibits.

When, before, in the history of the world, have the most influential minds in the community labored and striven to blot out, theoretically and practically, the ineffaceable distinction between a man and a brute, between a human soul and an inanimate chattel, to plant and enroot in our civil polity a vast, expanding system, in which conscience, reason, the capacities of religion, and the inborn convictions of accountability and immortality are made subservient and secondary to bones and muscles, and put upon auction blocks as incidents to the body that perisheth? When, before, in all our history, have men of eloquence and power ever traversed the country, and scattered letters and speeches, like the flakes of a snow-storm, to subdue and harmonize the public mind to such stupendous wrongs? When, before, since the May-Flower crossed the ocean with her precious burden, has any one minister of the Puritan stock ever dared or ever desired to put on priestly robes and enter the house of God, to defend slavery, or to palliate it? Sir, such things were never known before. *Sor: "Give me liberty, or I will give you death!"* It is a new spectacle for men and angels. It

must give a new joy in the world of darkness.

Another collateral effect which slavery has produced, is the promulgation from the Halls of Congress, and also from—what, in such cases, is not the *sacred*, but the *profane* desk—that there is no "Higher Law" than the Constitution, or than any interpretation which any corrupt Congress may put upon it. Such a doctrine is nothing less than palpable and flagrant atheism. If I am bound to obey any human law or Constitution, as my paramount rule of duty, thenceforth that rule becomes my supreme arbiter, judge, and god; and I am compelled, by logical necessity, to abjure, renounce, and depose all others. There cannot be two supreme rules of right. If I acknowledge myself bound by the divine law, and that comes in conflict with the human law, then I must disobey the latter. But if the human law be the Higher Law, and if it conflicts with God's law, then I am bound to disobey the law of God. If the Constitution be the "Higher Law," then we, on taking our seats in this House, and all magistrates and legislators, when entering upon the duties of their respective offices, ought not to take an oath before God to support the Constitution, but ought to swear by the Constitution to support that first, and God afterwards; provided it is convenient. I say, then, that this doctrine—which is one of the offshoots of slavery—that there is no higher law than the law of the State, is palpable and practical atheism. And yet it is perfectly well known to all who hear me, and to all who frequent the purlieus of Congress, that there is no butt of ridicule so common here, nothing which so readily and so frequently raises the "loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind," as a fling or jeer at the "higher law."

Sir, it is of fearful omen, when the laws of men are made, even in theory, to take precedence and override the laws of God. And the last aggravation is added to this iniquity, when the politician disguises himself beneath the garb of a priest, and cloaks his wickedness under the show of religion.

No person feels a profounder reverence, or would pay a sincerer homage to a godly, sin-avoiding, sin-exposing priesthood, than myself. But I have no adequate words to express my abhorrence for the clerical hypocrite, with whom religion is neither a sanctification of the soul, nor a purification of the body, but only a kind of policy of insurance against the retribution in another world for sins committed in this, accompanied all the while by knavish tricks on the part of the insured to cheat the Divine Insurer out of his premium.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I ask the gentleman from Massachusetts whether it is possible that the higher law of God can come in conflict with the Constitution?

Mr. MANN. I think it would be better to ask whether the Constitution comes in conflict with the higher law.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. I ask the gentleman if every American citizen does not obey the higher law of God when he obeys every part of the Constitution? And can any good result come from discussing these immaterial abstractions? Is not the spirit of the Constitution in accordance with the higher law? Can you point to a clause in the Constitution which, when fulfilling to the best of my ability, would make me violate the higher law of God?

Mr. MANN. That is not the point.

Mr. SUTHERLAND. It is the very point. You and others—I say it with all possible respect—disturb the harmony of this House and the country by trying to get up issues upon abstract questions of morality, which have nothing whatever to do with the proceedings of this House, or with correct public sentiment. If I should undertake to make an issue between you and me upon the subject of slavery, it would be wrong. Yet you get up here and attempt to make this issue before the country. You get up an issue upon an immaterial question of morality, which simply tends to excite men without any practical benefit.

Mr. MANN. I hope the gentleman will not interrupt me further. His argument would have answered just as well in the time of Herod, the Tetrarch, when he issued the order for the murder of all the children under two years of age. The murderers doubtless got ten-dollar commissioner fees for the deed. So those who massacred thirty-six thousand Protestants, on St. Bartholomew's day, at the ringing of a signal-bell, went by the "Higher Law" of the Pope, or of his vice-gerent, the King; and had not they their "Union" to save by it? And our Pilgrim Fathers were driven into exile by the "Higher Law" of a hierarchical Parliament. And so if you admit this doctrine, there is no enormity, actual or conceivable, which may not be perpetrated and justified under it.

The gentleman says I am discussing "immaterial abstractions," and raising issues that have no practical bearing. Is the Fugitive Slave Law an "immaterial abstraction?" a law which violates both the divine law and the Constitution of the country. Ask the free man, Gibson, who was sent into bondage under it when as much entitled to his liberty as you or I, whether that law has not some bearing on a practical question. Are not the Baltimore edicts before the country? And have they no practical bearing, when their very purpose is to suppress free speech; and when that purpose has been executed again and again—and the attempt has been made here, within the last half hour, upon me, to enforce it?

Now, sir, I do not believe in preaching against theoretical and distant sins, and letting real and present ones escape. I do not believe in denouncing Hindoo suttees, because they are on the other side of the globe, and defending the extension of slavery in our own land. That sin has the beguiling defence of office and prof-

its not less than ours. But that sin destroys only the body; ours the soul. The modern clergymen of the "lower law" school can select some monster of the Old Testament—Darius, Nebuchadnezzar, or Jeroboam—and hold them up for execration, while they suffer the greater moral monsters of their own parishes to escape with impunity. They have no mercy for Jeroboam, old hunker though he was, because he "drove Israel from following the Lord," more especially as there was no chance for the Presidency, nor any tariff, nor sale of dry goods to the South, to tempt him. But they forget that each and all of the worst sinners whose names blacken the page of history had their accompanying temptations, and their casuistry for self-defence, just as much as the offenders of our day. They forget that when posterity looks backwards upon great crimes, as they stand out in historic relief, they are seen in their foul nakedness and deformity, and without any of the palliations or pretexts by which their wickedness was softened to the tempted eye of the perpetrator. They forget that it will be as true of the crimes of our day, as of ancient ones, when the evanescent circumstances of the seduction have passed by—that then they, too, will stand out in the foreground of the historic canvass, in their full proportions, and in their native deformity, hideous, unmitigated, and execrable. Had not Ananias and Sapphira a temptation every whit as strong to keep back from the apostles a part of the price of their possessions, as though they had been offered a sinecure chaplaincy in the Navy for defending the Fugitive Slave Law? We have historic proof that Benedict Arnold attempted to justify his treason, on the ground that he was seeking the best good of the colonies, just as his followers in our times seek to justify themselves by the far less plausible plea of saving the Union.

I know it is said, that if the doctrine of the "Higher Law" is admitted, all laws will be set at naught, and civil Government be overthrown. All history refutes this; for, of all the men who have ever lived, those who contend for the higher law of God have universally been the most faithful and obedient, when human laws were coincident with the divine. That identical principle in our nature, which makes us true to the will of God, makes us also true to all the just commands of men.\*

\* What is the following fling at the "Higher Law," but explicit atheism:

"When nothing else will answer, they invoke religion, and speak of a higher law. Gentlemen, this North mountain is high, the Blue Ridge higher still, the Allegany higher than either, and yet this higher law ranges further than an eagle's flight above the highest peaks of the Allegany. [Laughter.] *No common vision can discern it, no conscience not transcendental and ecstatic can feel it, the hearing of common men never learns its high behests; and therefore one should think it is not a safe law to be acted on in matters of the highest practical moment. It is the*

Another consequence of most evil portent has grown out of the late political enthusiasm for slavery: I mean a false interpretation of the law of treason. Sir, you know, and we all know, that under the bloody reigns of British tyrants, *treason by construction* was the great engine of political and personal vengeance. Under the old doctrine of constructive treason, if living lips dared to preach the gospel of freedom, they were forced to preach the doctrine of abject submission to ungodly laws; for the heads they belonged to were decapitated and borne on soldiers' pikes through the streets of cities, and hung up to fester and rot at all the city gates. I could occupy the day with the recital of instances, where the purest innocence and the noblest virtues fell a sacrifice to a forced and arbitrary construction of the law of treason. Having lately looked through those English cases, I now declare that they were not one whit a greater outrage upon the English law, than was Judge Kane's charge to the grand jury in the Christiana cases. Both had in view the same object, to *put down agitation for freedom*, and Lord Jeffries's expositions were as plausible as Judge Kane's.

To exclude all possibility of constructive treason, under our Constitution, its framers defined that offence in the following words:

"Treason against the United States shall consist ONLY in levying war against them; or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort."

Judge Kane says, that whatever would make a man an *accessory* to the crime, in any other felony, makes him a *principal* in this; when the very intent of the new definition, in our Constitution, was so far to abrogate the English law. The emphatic word *only*, in our definition, expressly excludes the accessory. It is *only* the man who levies the war, or the man who adheres to the enemies of the country, who is, or, under our Constitution, can be a traitor. The other interpretation opens the door to all the constructive treasons known to the worst days of English judicial tyranny—the very door which the framers of our Constitution intended to lock and double-lock and fasten impreguably.

And again: The doctrine of accessories and the relation of accessories to principals, was a part of the English common law. That common law these United States never adopted, as has been decided again and again, and therefore there can be no accessories in treason, by construction.

And besides all this, the seventh section of the Fugitive Slave Law provides a penalty for every act which a man can commit in assisting the escape of a slave; so that, if any such act were treason before, it is no longer so; for no legal principle is better settled than that when

a subsequent statute reduces the penalty provided in a previous one, the previous act is so far repealed, even without any repealing words. On any ground, therefore, the charge of Judge Kane is only inferior in monstrosity to the law whose inherent atrocity he sought to aggravate.

A similar attempt to create constructive treason was made in the Syracuse cases; but the air of Western New York being more electric with freedom, had a salutary effect upon the health of the Court. Would to Heaven that these healthful breezes of the country could reach and sweep away the judicial miasma that stagnates upon our Atlantic cities.

The district attorney at Syracuse, having rendered himself obnoxious by the inordinate zeal with which he pursued the suspected in the rescue cases at that city, I was glad to see it stated in the newspapers that the ladies of the place had a meeting, and sent him a present of thirty pieces of silver. They were three-cent pieces, however—ninety cents in the whole! The ancient Judas got larger pieces. Such, however, is now the rivalry to fill his place, that the competitors must content themselves with smaller coin.

It was said, also, that when Jerry, the alleged fugitive in that case, reached her Majesty's dominions, he put the irons with which he had been "dressed" into a nice box, and sent them to President Fillmore. When the signer of the Fugitive Slave Law unboxed these irons, and unwrapped them, and first took in the full significance of their meaning, it must have presented a scene worthy the highest art of the historic painter! I trust it so happened that they were received and opened at a Cabinet meeting!

And under this prolific head of the collateral consequences of slavery, I say again, and finally, where else, since the light of the Christian era first dawned upon the world, has it ever been known that the leading men of a young Republic espoused the side of slavery? It is unnatural as parricide. Look at the Republics of Switzerland, or at the States General of Holland. Look at France at the period of the great Revolution, when in her maddened throes for liberty, after fifteen centuries of oppression, one of her first acts was the recognition of the natural and universal freedom of man. Look at the South American Republics, composed as they mainly were of Catholics, who for ages had been inured to bodily and mental thralldom, and amongst whom slavery was an existing institution, as it was here when our Declaration of Independence was promulgated, yet by a noble act of moral heroism they cast the incubus away. Yes, I repeat, ours is the first Republic since Christ died for men, whose leaders have disowned and deserted the principles of their Government, and become the willing champions of the most remorseless of despotisms.

code, however, of the fanatical and factious Abolitionists of the North."—*Daniel Webster's speech at Capon (Virginia) Springs, June, 1851.*

Sir, I may as well remark here as anywhere, in order to make any honest misconstruction of my views impossible, that when I speak of the all-comprehending wickedness of slavery—when I say that it is in relation to the wrongs and crimes of men—what the *Primum Mobile* was in the ancient systems of astronomy—an all-encircling and all-upholding concave, within which every wrong and every crime has its natural home—when I affirm this, I affirm it of the system or institution of slavery. And to this I wish to add—what all history proves—that good men may be implicated in a bad system—as in the English hierarchy, which I regard as a vicious system of church government; and yet how many super-eminently great, and good, and pious men it has produced; or, as in the Catholic religion, which I believe to be an untrue form of Christianity, and yet in no religion have there been brighter examples of purity and beneficence. In battling to overcome the moral wrongs and errors into which a man has been born, the moral sentiments, like the intellect, grow heroic as they become victorious, and in their noble strivings they reach a sublimity of virtue proportioned to the depths of vice from which they sprang. But this does not prevent bad systems from producing their natural fruits on the mass of men.

And now, having shown what a mighty wrong slavery is, in and of itself; having shown what collateral debasement, cruelty, and practical atheism, it generates and diffuses, let me ask, if the political Free Soil party do not go to the uttermost verge that patriot, moralist, or Christian can go, when it consents to let slavery remain where it is? There is an endeavor to make up a false issue for the country, and for the tribunal of history, on this subject. Free-Soilers are charged with interfering with slavery within the jurisdiction of the States where it is. This allegation is wholly unfounded. Our whole effort has been simply to keep it within the jurisdiction of the States where it is. We would not have it profane free territory. We would not allow it to double its present domain; we would not see it blast with nameless and innumerable woes, two-thirds of our territorial area on the Pacific coast, as it already has two-thirds on the Atlantic. This is all we have done. And, to the argument that, with only about three slaves to a square mile over all your territory, you, gentlemen of the slave States, must have more space, because you are becoming suffocated by so close crowding, we simply reply, that we cannot admit that argument, because it devotes the whole world to inevitable slavery. For, if you already need a greater expanse of territory for comfortable room, that, too, will soon be crowded with three slaves to a square mile, and the argument for further conquest and expansion will come back upon us. Yielding again, the argument will speedily recur again.

It will be a never-ending, still-beginning, pretext for extension, until the whole world shall become a vast realm of slavery—even the free States being engulfed with the rest, so that the dove of freedom will have no spot on the surface of the globe where she can set her foot.

And now, notwithstanding the infinite evil and wrong of slavery, intrinsic in it, and inseparable from it; notwithstanding the virus with which it poisons all our free institutions—its exclusion of independent communities from the brotherhood of the Union; its hardening the nation's heart against all people struggling for liberty; its atheist-making; its attempt to transfer the whole false English code of high treason into our law; and all its debasement of the republican sentiment, and the moral sentiment of this country—notwithstanding all this, the Baltimore Conventions decree that the subject of slavery shall be agitated among us no more forever.

Look at the comprehensiveness of this interdict. It embraces all subjects. It forbids the political economist from discussing the relative productiveness of free and slave labor. It forbids the educationist from demonstrating that a slaveholding people must always, from the necessity of the case, be an ignorant people—a people divided not only into castes of wealth, but into castes of intelligence. It forbids genius from presenting Truth in the glowing similitudes of Fiction; and that divine-hearted woman, the authoress of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," is under the Baltimore ban. It forbids the poet, whose lips from olden days have been touched as with live coals from off the heavenly altar—from ever again kindling the hearts of mankind with a divine enthusiasm for liberty. It strikes out all the leading chapters from the book of the moralist. It puts its seal upon the lips of the minister of Christ, when he would declare the whole counsel of God, and forbids him ever again to preach from the text, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." All—worldly prosperity, education, genius, morality, religion, truth—are struck out by these Baltimore Conventions in their maniacal partisanship.

The noblest men whom God has ever sent into the world—patriots, reformers, philanthropists, apostles, and Jesus Christ himself—are on the side of freedom. Tyrants, usurpers, traitors, men-stealers, the wholesale murderers and robbers of nations, are on the side of slavery. The Baltimore Conventions enlist under the banners of the latter. They affiliate with the House of Hapsburg, and with Nicholas; with the King of Naples, and with the "Prince President" of France. One might almost suppose they had plagiarized their resolves from the Paris *Moniteur*, where that ape who mimics the imperial grandeur he cannot comprehend, records his tyrannical decrees against freedom of speech. Louis Napoleon decreed

free discussion out of existence in France. Six hundred men at Baltimore decreed the same thing for this country. The ape succeeded; they fail.

And how are these resolves to be construed, provided new questions respecting slavery arise, or questions already started are precipitated upon us? Should an attempt to annex Cuba, in order still further to aggrandize the Slave Power, be made—and if General Pierce should be elected such attempt doubtless will be made—or should a new slave State, with a slave Constitution, from California, apply for admission—or should Mexico be again dismembered to form new slave territory and new slave States—in the occurrence of these events, or of either of them, how are these Baltimore resolutions to be then construed? We know perfectly well what claim will be set up. It will be said that the new events come within the terms of the prohibition—the *casus fœderis*—and bind the nation to silence. It will be claimed that the resolutions cover not only all subjects, but all time; and enslave our children as well as ourselves.

I have exposed the character and extent of those resolutions. Let me now expose their motive. I charge upon those Conventions the base motive of attempting to silence discussion by force—as in this House and in the Senate, the same spirit once rejected petitions, and would now silence debate—because they are conscious they cannot meet it by argument. The Fugitive Slave Law, for instance, is assailed by the jurist, because it is unconstitutional; by the patriot, because it disgraces the country in the eyes of the civilized world; by the religious man, because it is unchristian; and by every one who has the sentiment of humanity in his bosom, for its unheard-of cruelty. The upholders of that law can answer no one of these arraignments. Their only resource, therefore, is the dastardly denial of discussion and free speech—like Louis Napoleon, who having no possibility of reply to the accusations of treachery, perjury, and usurpation, forbids the accusations to be made. Among all our constitutional judges, and among all those mock judges called Commissioners, there is not one who has met the arguments against the constitutionality of this law. They intrench themselves behind a feeble rampart of precedents as their only defence. Judge Nogginus decides it to be constitutional, because Judge Scroggins has decided it to be so. And when we look back to Judge Scroggins for light, we find he decided it to be constitutional, because Judge Spriggins had held it to be so. Chief Justice Shaw, of Massachusetts, whom I regard as one of the ablest judges who ever administered the common law, anywhere, virtually admitted, in the Sims case, that if the question of the constitutionality of this law were a new one, the affirmative could not be sustained. I repeat, then, it is a dastardly order to keep

silence, because they cannot meet discussion. Necessity is their only defence,

“ ——— and with necessity,  
The tyrant's plea, excuse their devilish deed.”

Let me state, in a few simple propositions, the unconstitutionality of the Fugitive Slave Law, which has been so much elaborated elsewhere:

Excepting the Army and Navy, the Constitution of the United States declares that “no person shall \* \* be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” It also declares that, “in suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved.”

Now, every case of claim for an alleged slave necessarily involves both the question of liberty and the question of property.

By the Constitution of every free State in this Union, every person within it is presumed to be a free man; or, in other words, there is never any *prima facie* presumption that any man within it is a slave. Every man is presumptively free until proved to be otherwise. If the civil condition or *status* of slavery is to be fastened upon any one, it must be done by the decision of a tribunal having jurisdiction over liberty and property—that is, by court and jury. The *prima facie* evidence that a man is free, entitles him to the tribunal and the trial of a free man. But under this Fugitive Slave Law, a man's *prima facie* right to the tribunal and the trial of a free man is taken away, not by a court and jury, but by a complaint and warrant. A claimant demands a human being presumptively free as his slave, and that mere demand is made to cancel the presumption of freedom and self-ownership, to take him away from a freeman's tribunal of court and jury, and to carry him for trial before a slave tribunal—that is, a Commissioner. Is it replied, that the decision of the Commissioner that he is a slave, and not a free man, proves that he had no right to the tribunal and the trial of a free man—I retort, that before an unbought, unbribed, freeman's tribunal, there might have been a contrary decision; but you prejudged him to be a slave, by carrying him before a slave tribunal, and you robbed him of the first right of a freeman, by depriving him of a freeman's tribunal and trial. For him, and for his case, you abolished the trial by jury. And if, by virtue of such complaint and warrant, you can deprive any person, in any free State, of a trial by jury, you can by the same rule deprive all the men in all the free States of this trial—that is, you can abolish that trial for all this class of cases; and then, by equivalent legislation, you can abolish it in all cases whatever. Where, then, is that right to a trial by jury which the Constitution declares “shall be preserved?”

The law, then, is palpably unconstitutional, because it takes from a man presumptively

free the right to be tried as a freeman; and it is because the Baltimore Conventions cannot answer this argument, that they forbid its promulgation.

And besides this, the proofs which the law provides for and declares *conclusive* are abhorrent to reason, to common sense, and to the common law. It provides that evidence taken in a Southern State, at any time or place which a claimant may select, without any notice, or any possibility of knowledge on the part of the person to be robbed and enslaved by it, may be clandestinely carried or sent to any place where it is to be used, and there sprung upon its victim, as a wild beast springs from its jungle upon the passer-by; and it provides that this evidence, thus surreptitiously taken and used, shall be *conclusive* proof of the facts of slavery and of escape from slavery. It does not submit the sufficiency of the evidence to the judgment of the tribunal; but it arbitrarily makes it *conclusive*, whether sufficient or not. It abolishes the common law distinction between competency and credibility. Indeed, it abolishes the elementary idea of a court of justice itself, considered as a tribunal whose functions are, first and chiefest, to hear both sides, and then to discern between truth and falsehood. The heathen emblem of justice was that of a goddess, holding balances in her hand, and weighing with holy exactness all conflicting probabilities and testimonies. The true emblem of this law would be that of some Glossin lawyer clutching at ten dollars as a bribe, and trampling the sacred balances under foot.

What would the Southern gentlemen who hear me say, if, while attending to your duties in this Hall, a miscreant in any Northern city or State, without knowledge or possibility of knowledge on your part, should now be suborning witnesses to obtain evidence that your house, your plantation, or cotton crop, was his, and by and by should make his appearance on your premises, demanding instant possession, and, in case of refusal or demur, should drag you before some ten-dollar magistrate, read his *conclusive* proof, while you are forced to be dumb, and then thrust you out of estate, house, and home? And yet this Fugitive Slave Law is as much more atrocious than that would be, as liberty is more precious than pelf.

The cruel fruits of this law have been such as might be expected to grow on so wicked a stock. The first man sent into slavery under it, Adam Gibson, was a free man. When the claimant's agent brought Gibson to him, he refused to receive him; for he knew, and he knew that all his household and neighbors would know, that Gibson had never been his slave. And so, after this free man had been seized as a slave, and sentenced as a slave, and dragged forcibly away from home to Maryland as a slave, by the authority and at the expense of the United States, he was set adrift and left to find his way back as he could.

Of the first eight persons doomed to slavery under this law, four were free men.

When this dreadful law was first broached, it was said that we might rely upon the intelligence and the integrity of the Southern courts to send into the land of freedom no certificates that would doom men to bondage, unless founded upon competent and undoubted testimony. But in the case of Daniel, who was tried before Mr. Commissioner Smith, at Buffalo, the slave claimant never carried a single witness before the court that made the record of slavery and of escape. The Southern court made the record on affidavits only, and then gave the claimant a certified copy of it, without ever seeing or hearing a witness in the case. These affidavits were given by nobody knows whom, and sworn to by nobody knows whom—perhaps not sworn to at all, but forged for the occasion; yet on sight of them the commissioner pronounced Daniel to be a slave. It afterwards turned out, on a hearing before Judge Conkling, of the United States court, that there never had been one particle or scintilla of evidence before the commissioner, on which his ten-dollar certificate of slavery was four Jed.

In another case, in Philadelphia, Commissioner Ingraham decided some point directly against law and authority; and when a decision of a judge of the United States court was produced against him, he coolly said he differed from the judge, made out the certificate, pocketed the ten dollars, and sent a human being to bondage. There could be no appeal from this iniquity, for the law allows none.

In another case, before Mr. Commissioner Hallett, of Boston, where white persons were examined, on a charge of rescuing an alleged slave, he admitted this foreign evidence of a State court, taken in secret, against the native-born citizens of a free State.

And yet, with all these abominations on the face of the law, and after this long train of outrages in its administration, the Baltimore Whig resolutions, which, perhaps, are the less iniquitous of the two, declare that the law shall not be modified, unless "time and experience" shall demonstrate some abuse of its powers. How low down must these men live, that they do not call what has already happened an abuse!

A story is current respecting the origin of this law, for whose authenticity I cannot personally vouch; but it certainly carries verisimilitude on its face. The bill is said to have been concocted by a Southern disunionist, anxious for some pretext to break up the Republic; and who therefore prepared a bill so unconstitutional, so abominable and fiendish, that, as he believed, even the recklessness of Northern servility must spurn it. He would then make its rejection his war-cry for disunion. But, alas! he had not fathomed the baseness of Northern politicians. What a Southern "fire-eater" thought too unrighteous for any human

being to touch, the Northern aspirants for the Presidency adopted "with alacrity," and rolled as a sweet morsel under their tongue. Now, both Whig and Democratic Conventions reaffirm the law, and attribute to it a sacredness and a permanency unknown to the Constitution itself.

Sir, when I survey, one after another, the horrid features of this law—its palpable violation both of the letter and the spirit of the Constitution; its contempt and defiance of that great organic law, the Declaration of Independence, and of the whole spirit and acts and lives of our revolutionary fathers; its repugnance to all the noblest maxims and principles of the British Constitution, consecrated and hallowed as these have been from age to age by patriots' struggles and by martyrs' blood; its fabrication of such a code of evidence as was never before placed on the statute-book of any civilized nation; its provisions for deciding *conclusively* the question of a man's liberty, in what is to him a foreign State, and before what is to him a foreign tribunal, without the possibility of his appearing there to confront witnesses, or even of knowing what the conspirators against him are doing; its peremptory orders to seize a man, and try the unspeakably precious question of his freedom and self-ownership, "in a summary manner," when even robbers, pirates, and murderers, must have notice of their accusation, adequate time to prepare for defence and counsel for assistance; its bribing magistrates to decide against liberty, and in favor of slavery, and its creation of a set of officers, some of whom have decided as to prove themselves capable of accepting a bribe; its instant execution of the dreadful sentence, without appeal or writ of error; its repudiation of the statute of limitations, (the policy of which is recognised by all civilized nations, not only in cases of debt, but in regard to the title to real estate, and even in regard to crimes,) so that a master who has abandoned his slave for forty years can come and pluck him from wife and children, from home, property, and friends—and when, further, I see the practical workings of this law—free Northern citizens carried into bondage; Southern professors in the art of kidnapping, chasing the shrieking fugitive from all his hiding-places and his altars; monster fathers pursuing the children of their own loins, as lately happened in New York, to sell them into slavery; the virtuous woman hunted by the lecher, from whose whips and scourgings she had fled, to avoid his guilty embrace; thousands of laborious and peaceable citizens amongst us, surrounded by self-earned comfort and competence, fleeing from all the endearing relations of kindred and neighborhood, out of a republic into a monarchy, to regain the lost birth-right of freedom—thus re-enacting the scenes of the Huguenot flight under Charles IX; and, as the crowning cruelty of the whole, an entire race of free people, of innocent peo-

ple, of people whose ancestors fought and fell in the battles of the Revolution, and who have as much right, not merely to security and protection, but to the feeling of security and protection, under our Government, as you or I—when I see these people, filled with consternation and dismay for themselves and for their children, trembling when they look around them upon the earth, lest some tiger, in human shape, should spring from his ambush and seize them, and plunge them into slavery's hell, and trembling when they look upward into the sky, because God seems to have forsaken them; sir, when I contemplate all these things, I am compelled, though against the common faith, to acknowledge evidence of supernatural inspiration in the hearts of men. But it is infernal and diabolical inspiration, whose evidences I recognise. Sir, this Fugitive Slave Law was not made by man alone; for unaided total depravity is not equal to all its atrocities. Place the law and the Baltimore edicts side by side, the command and the prohibition together. "You shall chase the fugitive, but you shall not speak." As in the days of the early Christians, or like the Pilgrim Fathers, in the times of the non-conformists, we may hold our meetings only in dens or caves, or in the most secret recesses of our dwellings, with doors locked and guarded. Once the bloodhounds were muzzled; now the bloodhounds are let loose, and freemen are muzzled.

Sir, when any humane and intelligent man reflects upon the attributes of this law, and then turns to the stat of the Baltimore Conventions, that it shall not be agitated or discussed, he cannot but tremble with an agony of indignation and contempt. These resolves are so subversive, not only of all divine but of all human government; they are so audacious and yet so impotent; they assume so imperial an air, while yet they are more imbecile than an idiot's gibberish, that the great poet of our language, whose mind supplies redundant images for all things vile and mean, has but one passage that befits their vileness. To borrow his words, these Baltimore resolutions are a

"—— birth-strangled babe,  
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab."

Justice and gratitude, however, demand that I should say that there were sixty-seven members of the Whig Convention who stood out bravely and to the last against this attempted abolition of the freedom of speech. In the Democratic Convention there seems to have been scarcely a whisper of dissent.

Sir, I cannot but acknowledge that the events I have recited have an ominous look for the cause of freedom. It seems as though the black cloud which has settled down over Europe was extending its gloomy folds across this country, to envelop, in darkness and despair, the last hopes of liberty upon earth. But I have infinite faith in God and in truth. I believe that cloud to be surcharged with lightnings which



will yet blast the oppressor. And after the lightnings and the storm have passed, then shall come the day of universal freedom and joy.

False as those Baltimore Conventions were to the Constitution of the United States, to the Declaration of Independence, to humanity, and to God, yet when we come to scan their proceedings more closely, we find that they were amenable to a power they refused to acknowledge. It was there as in the ancient mythology: the gods decreed, but there was an inexorable fate standing behind the gods, and controlling their decrees. That irresistible fate, which bound the Conventions as with a spell, and hemmed in their desires and aptitudes for wrong, which was a will within their will, was the genius of Northern Anti-Slavery. There were at least half a dozen candidates, whom the Democratic Convention vastly preferred to the one they finally took up with; and there was at least one, whom the Whig Convention, under the Southern pressure brought to bear upon them, would have consented to take, but for the uplifted arm of the North, which menaced inexorable defeat for any such selection, and would have terribly executed its menace. As in the vision of the Scottish seer, "coming events cast their shadows before," so here the coming thunders of the people's rebuke sent their echoes forward, and forbade both Conventions from inscribing the more apostate names upon their banners. It was the Free Soil party of the North that held those thunders in its hands; and if it did not determine whom the Conventions should nominate, it did determine whom they should not.

Why was not the Democratic party nominate General CASS? For forty years he had stood conspicuously before the country; had served in early life, in a military capacity, on the Northern frontier; been afterwards Governor of a Territory now swarming with three millions of men; Ambassador abroad and Cabinet Minister and Senator at home. Besides, he was a man of unblamable private life—one who, whatever sinister rewards he may have expected, never exposed himself to the imputation of bartering his integrity for "dotations;" reputed, and I believe justly reputed, to be a temperance man—which fact, by itself, had he been a candidate against a man of known intemperate habits, would have given him fifty thousand votes in New England alone—a fact which future Presidential aspirants will do well to heed. Why was not General CASS nominated? His Nicholson letter was the flaming barrier, which neither the perverse Baalam of Democracy, nor its beast, was able to pass by! By that letter, as the returns of 1848 show, General CASS struck off a hundred thousand votes from his ticket in the State of New York alone. General CASS died of a modern disease, called "letter-writing," which has

proved singularly fatal to Presidential candidates. The Nicholson letter was the malignant distemper that bloated and killed him.

Why was not Mr. Buchanan nominated—the favorite of that great State which, as she inclines one way or the other, seems to rock and sway the Union, and determine the result in every Presidential election? He was a man of great powers—one whom nature had laid out on a grand scale. When the history of this country is written, Mr. Buchanan's name cannot be put in a parenthesis. He made General Jackson, rather than General Jackson him. His talents, with those of Gov. Marcy, of New York, were the salt that saved Mr. Polk's Administration from putridity. He was a daring man. In 1848, in an official communication to the French Provisional Government, he boldly obtruded his counsels upon them for the formation of their Constitution, as though the new Republic were his ward. Lamartine politely made a French bow in return; but saying, as he gave it, he would not tolerate advice from any other people God ever created.

Why was not Mr. Buchanan nominated? Ah! he had been even bolder in his domestic diplomacy than in his foreign. His offer to run the Missouri Compromise line through to the Pacific ocean, and to sacrifice all south of that line on the altar of the Moloch of slavery, was a grand act of apostacy to Northern sentiment and to freedom, which brought the films of death over his eyes. His *coup d'état* was a *coup de grace*. He will be less successful in making such Northern platforms than in making French Constitutions. In all the States north of Pennsylvania, during the forty-nine balloting, he rarely received more than half a dozen votes; and I think his average in those States did not come up to that insignificant, or rather that *significant* number.

And what was the fate of the Senator from Illinois, whom some sagacious and overreaching Whig called the Young Giant—a nickname which his own friends were silly enough to adopt? I say silly, for everybody knows that the common notion which the common people have of a "*young giant*" is that of unnatural and precocious *animal* development. The very name conjures up images of rowdyish passion and appetite, of nocturnal revels, of a sort of wild, obscene force, unchastened by the lessons of experience, and untempered by Nestorian wisdom. What was his reward for his implied or understood offer of the annexation of Cuba? From the four States of Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, he never at any one time received more than sixteen votes, and in four-fifths of the balloting he received but five or six. In winning the South, he forgot the North.

"Vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself  
And falls on t'other side"

Or, as a graver poet has expressed it, these worshippers at the Southern shrine, while they renounced Northern constituencies, were

"like idiots gazing in a brook,  
Who leap at stars and fasten in the mud."

I cannot stop to enumerate the victims in detail. The slain Hectors may have a monument and be remembered; but it is the felicity of the vulgar herd, in an ungodly contest, that they rot in a forgotten grave.

Long before the Baltimore Convention met, we had supposed that the Northern Democratic aspirants for the Presidency had done their worst; that they had drank the last dregs of the cup of humiliation. But Southern genius seems exhaustless in resources for Northern debasement. Some unknown political upstart in Richmond, Virginia, obtruded himself into notice by shouting out the two words, "PRESIDENCY," "PRO-SLAVERY," to all the candidates, and instantly thirteen of them were at his feet. He put to them some "more last questions" in the catechism of infamy—"whether, if they could be elected, they would veto any bill repealing the Fugitive Slave Law," and so forth. All answered as his questions indicated they must. Forgetful of the nature of the oath they longed to take, forgetful that it is a violation of the whole spirit of our Government for the Executive to interfere with Congress, by telling them beforehand what acts of theirs he will not approve, they all hastened to give the desired response. He did not send them a pro-slavery creed, with a blank left for their signatures, but he compelled them to write out their own shame with their own hands. He did not send the collar and chains all ready for them to put on; but he said, forge them and rivet them on yourselves; and, submissive, they forged them and riveted them on, and expressed gratitude for the favor.

And now, where are those thirteen Democratic candidates? And where, too, are those two Whig candidates who, within the last two years, have done every conceivable thing, and a thousand things before inconceivable, to propitiate the slave power? Gone, sir; all gone with those who perish at Tyburn! They rebelled against humanity and against God, and verily they have their reward. They mounted a platform, where they hoped to be crowned, amid the huzzas of the people; but an avenging Nemesis stood there, and in the twinkling of an eye changed it into the "drop platform" of the executioner. Sir, when a single malefactor receives at the hands of justice his well-merited doom, the moralist seizes the example to give a warning to others who may be tempted, in like cases, to offend. He points to the ignominious body of his victim, and, as the herald of God, he proclaims the eternal law, that crime never can compensate the criminal. He declares that, until finite man can overpower or circumvent the infinite Creator, the

retributions of sin shall pursue the sinner. If the preacher does this when he has but a single victim for a text, what an accumulation of energy and emphasis is given to his admonitions when there are fifteen victims before him!

Now, there are two or three general observations on this impressive spectacle, which I wish to make. In the first place, all the leading candidates of both Conventions were Northern men. Would not the historian have signalized the event as something most extraordinary, if fifteen Southern champions of slavery, born and bred in its midst, whose very growth, bodily and mental, had been only the accretion of pro-slavery particles and ideas, and who were committed to the institution by a life-long series of acts, had suddenly gone over to Northern Free-Soilers, and offered to stand upon their platform to obtain their votes? Would it have at all diminished the marvel, if these fifteen Southern applicants for Northern support, with all the followers whom lust of power or of money could enlist, had gone through all the South, vociferating that, unless they should adopt the Free Soil platform, the Union would be dissolved? I think such a chapter in history would never cease to create amazement and wonder. Is it not infinitely more wonderful, in this age of the world, that Northern men should do for slavery what we could never expect, at one time, so many Southern men to do even for freedom?

My second remark pertains to the number of the candidates. Never were there even half so many on the Presidential race-course before. Now, why were they so numerous, as well as all from the North? The answer is obvious. The South had said again and again, and most explicitly, to the North, "Give us your most pro-slavery man, and we will adopt him." It is easy to see that when moral or even intellectual qualifications are the test in choosing a President, the candidates must be few; but if devotion to slavery is the sole test, then there may not only be fifteen, but five hundred or five thousand. In this way the competitors become so numerous that the chances of success are worth nothing. Nobody will pay much for a lottery ticket, when the blanks are to the prizes as a hundred to one. It was a poor speculation, therefore, for the Presidential aspirants to put the price of the office so low that anybody, however obscure before, could become a rival. Cass, Buchanan, Marcy, Douglas, Dallas, Dickinson, and so forth, should have thought of this before they entered the lists, and put themselves on an equality with a man whom not one in five thousand out of New Hampshire could remember ever to have heard of before, and yet who plucked the prize out of their hands.

Another remark is, that the Southern vote, in both Conventions, could have been concen-

trated at any time upon either one of the Northern candidates, with one remarkable exception—which I will mention by and by—provided only that the Northern men could have united upon him. At any moment the South would have accepted General Cass, or Mr. Buchanan, or Governor Marey. In the Whig Convention, the South was most anxious to take Mr. Fillmore; but it was impossible to bring the North to their support. Each of them, by the eagerness of his pro-slavery course, had signed his own death-warrant in States enough to defeat him. And as to Mr. Fillmore, on whom the South was more unanimous than on any one of all the other candidates, his bloody right hand had signed the Fugitive Slave Law; and therefore it was as certain as anything future can be, that he could not obtain a single electoral vote north of Mason and Dixon's line. The infinite mercy of God may wash that blot from his name in another world, but it can never be forgotten in this. And thus they all came under that great moral law which forever cries "Woe! woe!" to the offender. Fascinated by the brilliancy of the prize, they forgot the eternal law of rectitude and humanity, by which alone it can be honorably won and worn.

[A VOICE. What do you say of General Pierce?]

Mr. MANN. Some one inquires what I say of General Pierce. I say of General Pierce, that if he had been conspicuous in the pro-slavery contest for the last two years; if he had been known as the ardent lover of the Fugitive Slave Law, and had answered the Richmond Scott letter about a veto of it, he never would have received the Baltimore nomination. Some other man would have been exhumed for the occasion. Not knowledge of him, but ignorance of him, secured his nomination.

[A VOICE. How of General Scott?]

Mr. MANN. Had General Scott devoted himself to the cause of slavery for the last two years, as his competitors had done, he would not have been nominated. His short-comings in that iniquity, as everybody knows, is the reason, and I might almost say the sole reason, why the South and the pro-slavery part of the North oppose him. But for this, the South would prefer him before either of his rivals.

In regard to Mr. Webster, there are three points which I propose to elucidate—his position of special and marked hostility to slavery in 1848, what he did for the cause of slavery in 1850, and how the South requited him in 1852. His case is peculiarly impressive. Instructive warnings as all the others are, yet "the Secretary stands alone." I am about to speak of his downfall in no spirit of personal exultation, though he has done me the greatest wrong. Because, when sitting on the top of his political Olympus, he hurled his shafts at me, I scorn to retaliate when he lies deserted

and despairing at its base. The man does not live, (unless now it be himself,) who felt a more poignant grief at his ruin than was felt in this heart of mine. But it was not on the 21st of June last, and at Baltimore, that he fell; but on the 7th of March, 1850, in the Senate of the United States. It was then that he sunk his beaming forehead in the dust, never again, I fear, to be lifted up. It was then that he tore from his brow the glorious diadem of Fame, and cast its clustered stars away—a diadem richer than ever blazed upon the brow of royalty, for its gems were not gathered from rock or mine, but from the more precious treasures of wisdom and eloquence. Then thousands of hearts were wrung with anguish, as cold, relentless, and blaspheming, those apostate doctrines fell from his lips. I say no bosom, save now perhaps his own, was ever more deeply saddened at the spectacle of that moral ruin than mine. As I think of him now, ever recurring and dirge-like do the elegiac strains, written for the occasion by the great Poet of Humanity, wake their mournful echoes in my breast:

"So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn  
Which once he wore!  
The glory from his gray hairs gone  
Forevermore!

Revile him not—the Tempter hath  
A snare for all;  
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,  
Befit his fall!

Oh! dumb be passion's stormy rage,  
When he who might  
Have lighted up and led his age,  
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh to mark  
A bright soul driven,  
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,  
From hope and Heaven!

Let not the land, once proud of him,  
Insult him now,  
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,  
Dishonored brow.

But let its humblest sons, instead,  
From sea to lake,  
A long lament, as for the dead,  
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught  
Save power remains—  
A fallen angel's pride of thought,  
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone: from those great eyes  
The soul has fled;  
When faith is lost, when honor dies,  
The man is dead!

Then pay the reverence of old days  
To his dead fame;  
Walk backward, with averted gaze,  
And hide his shame!"

Still, I should leave this part of my subject maimed and incomplete, should I forbear to draw the moral which the fate of this eminent man so impressively teaches. In the history of the world, it is inexpressibly sad that offences

should come. It would be still more sad if we could not use them to warn others from offending. Besides, the drama, in one of whose scenes we were brought together upon the stage and enacted a part, has now been played out, and I am now able to establish by history all the positions I then maintained by argument.

The grandeur of Mr. Webster's intellect—the first point always made in his defence—I readily admit. On this point I give his friends *carte blanche* of concession and agreement—the whole argument their own way.

But, on the next point, I claim to have the whole concession and argument my own way: that though his intellect were fitted to fill a "Dome of Thought," vast as one of those Egyptian statues that have been lately found on the banks of the Nile, from whose craniums the natives have long been in the habit of cutting millstones without sensibly diminishing their bulk, yet if he could exchange it all to blot out the history of the 7th of March speech, he would make a divine speculation.

For proof of this, I might cite volumes. I might refer to his Pilgrim Address at Plymouth, and his reply to Col. Hayne, and select something from almost every page of those volumes of eloquence—beautiful as painting, and grand as statuary—whose appeals fell upon men's hearts like an afflatus of the spirit of God. With all this, I might then contrast what he has written and spoken since the day of his downfall, pictorial as it is, with emblems of whips and chains, of auction-blocks, and shrieking fugitives, fleeing from the bloody lash and the lecher's arms, and finding no protection in the sanctuary of Faneuil Hall, or under the shadow of Bunker Hill, or by the sacred monuments of Lexington and Concord.

But I will confine myself to a single item of proof, irrefragable and conclusive:

The Buffalo Convention of 1848 proclaimed its determination "to maintain the rights of free labor against the aggressions of the slave power, and to secure free soil for a free people."

It declared its "independence, of the slave power, and its fixed determination to rescue the Federal Government from its control."

It declared that the Proviso of Jefferson, to prohibit slavery in all the Territories, and the Ordinance of 1787, excluding slavery from the Northwestern Territory, "clearly show that it was the settled policy of the nation, not to extend, nationalize, or encourage, but to limit, localize, and discourage slavery; and to this policy, which should never have been departed from, the Government ought to return."

It declared "that it is the duty of the Federal Government to relieve itself from all responsibility for the existence or continuance of slavery wherever that Government possesses constitutional authority to legislate on that subject, and is thus responsible for its existence."

It declared "that the only safe means of preventing the extension of slavery into territory now free, is to prohibit its existence in all such territory by an act of Congress."

It declared "that we accept the issue which the slave power has forced upon us, and to their demand for more slave territories, our calm but final answer is, no more slave States—no more slave territory."

And what did Mr. Webster say of this platform, within one month after it had been adopted? This is his language:

"I have said, gentlemen, that in this Buffalo platform, this collect of the new school, there is nothing new. There is nothing in it that all the Whigs of the Northern and Middle States may not adopt. Gentlemen, it is well known that there is nothing in this Buffalo platform which, in general, does not meet the approbation of all the Whigs of the Middle and Northern States. Suppose, now, that all of us who are Whigs should go and join the Free Soil party, what would be the result? Why, so far nothing would happen, but that the Whig party would have changed its name. That would be all. Instead of being the Whig party, it would be the Free Soil party. We should be all there, exactly upon the same principles upon which we have always stood."

Now, contrast this full, explicit, comprehensive, and apparently ingenuous subscription and adhesion to all the doctrines and articles of the Buffalo platform, in 1848, with the 7th of March speech in 1850, and with all that has since followed it from the same source.

Surely, if General Jackson, in 1836, in order to obtain a third election, had courted and defended the United States Bank, written and spoken through all the Eastern cities in its behalf, and made James Watson Webb and Nicholas Biddle his bosom confidants and counselors; surely, if Mr. Clay, in 1848, had declared for free trade, against all tariffs, against river and harbor improvements, and against all the policy that had most signalized his life; surely, if Mr. Calhoun, during the controversy respecting the new Territories, had suddenly avowed himself the disciple of Clarkson and Wilberforce, and had raised the standard of "immediate emancipation;" surely, I say, neither of these events would have furnished such ample material of contradiction and amazement as are supplied by the melancholy case I am now considering. After having nurtured, tutored, and led Northern Anti-Slavery sentiment for thirty years; after having claimed the "patented thunder" of the Wilmot Proviso; and after having discovered the North star, in a single day, without premonition or cause of change, Mr. Webster espouses doctrines more Southern than South Carolina, and becomes Calhouner than Mr. Calhoun.

Where shall the searcher of history find a parallel for this? I know of none. I can conceive but one—that of Moses, from the confines of Jordan, and the top of Pisgah, commanding the children of Israel to march back into the land of Egypt, for re-subjugation to Pharaoh;

yet striving to persuade them that the "geography" and "scenery" of the Nile would render slavery there impossible.

And yet, when the trial-hour of the Baltimore Convention came, what did he gain by it all? A single Southern State? Not one. A single delegate from a Southern State? Not one. With all the efforts that official power, and the wealth of cities and amazing industry, could make; with all that subscription nominations, and Faneuil Hall meetings, and Castle Garden committees, and Wall street, and State street, and subsidized presses, and fraudulent hopes of tariff and Southern trade, could effect, Mr. Webster could rally but an average of twenty-nine votes in a convention of almost three hundred members; and never, on any balloting, according to the political thermometer which measured his popularity, did he rise above thirty-two degrees—the point of eternal congelation! No Southern State gave him a vote! No Southern delegate was sent there to give him a vote! Fifty-three opportunities occurred, extending from day to day, and, according to an account published in the *Boston Courier*, from a professed eye-witness of the scene, the Northern friends of Mr. Webster besought their Southern brethren with prayers and entreaties, sad and tearful enough to have melted flint, to have melted platinum, to have melted anything but the inflexible heart of slavery, and yet they were inexorable. Nay, according to the published statement of his friend, Doctor Bell, a delegate from the Fourth Congressional District of Massachusetts, after the fifty-second ballot, and when it became certain that General Scott would be nominated the next time, these Southern gentlemen "were earnestly appealed to, as a matter of courtesy, and to place our candidate [Mr. Webster] right [wrong?] on the page of history, to unite in the final vote on Mr. Webster, which would have left him with some one hundred and twenty or thirty votes"—they refused to give him even that empty compliment.

So certain has been the fate of Mr. Webster, for the last eighteen months, that I and all those with whom I am politically associated have foreseen it and predicted it with as much confidence as an astronomer foretells an eclipse. Let us trust that the fate of such victims will not be lost for the future upon Northern men.

Sir, out of this Fugitive Slave Law has arisen an ill-sounding, half-barbarous word, to express the wholly barbarous idea that the law is never to be repealed or modified. It is the word "Finality." This word has already got into somewhat common use in regard to its objects. It is destined to get into universal use in regard to its authors. I think General Cass and Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Fillmore and Mr. Webster, with many others, have by this time an interior and realizing sense of what the word "finality" means. Though too late for

them to profit by it, I hope it will be blessed to the use of others.

And what palliation, what pretext, what subterfuge even, had these men for such betrayal of human rights? Nothing, literally nothing, but that fraudulent idea of "danger to the Union;" that cry of "wolf," which the South always raises when she has an object to accomplish; and which she will always continue to raise, on pretences more and more shadowy and evanescent, the more we have the folly to heed it. The same threat is now, at this instant time, made, if the North does not give them their choice in the two candidates for the Presidency.

Among redundant proofs, demonstrating that the Union has been in no peril, nor shadow of peril, there are two which never have been answered, and never can be answered. Notwithstanding all that was done in this House, and more especially in the Senate, and by all the pro-slavery presses and pro-slavery champions, North and South, during the year 1850, to create a panic in behalf of the Union, they were never able to effect the price of the United States stocks, neither in this country nor in Europe, so that the difference could be discovered with a microscope. Now, of all men living, stockholders and annuitants are the most sensitive. Universally they are a timid race. If there be a cloud in the heavens, or a ripple on the surface, they fear wreck, and shout the alarm. But timid as they constitutionally are, not politicians nor panic makers could discompose their serenity by all their insane cries about the crumbling of the Union to pieces; and there was not a member of the Castle Garden committees who would have taken one cent less, or would not have given every cent as much, for United States securities on the days when they sent forth their fraudulent resolves as before or after.

On this point I will cite an authority whose soundness upon the question in issue I believe in, and certainly my opponents will not dispute

"We have preserved and fostered credit till all have become interested in its further continuance and preservation. It has run deep and wide into our whole system of social life. Every man feels the vibration when a blow is struck upon it. And this is the reason why nobody has escaped the influence of the Secretary's recent measure. While credit is delicate, sensitive, easily wounded, and more easily alarmed, it is also infinitely ramified, diversified, extending everywhere, and touching everything."\*

And yet the very men who, in their capacity of politicians, shrieked "danger to the Union," in their other capacity of stock-dealers and merchants, never varied their asking or their giving prices one jot or tittle. They cried "earthquake," when not a rumble could be heard nor a jar felt; and they tried to make

\* *Webster's Speeches*—[*Speech on the Removal of the Deposites*—vol. 4, p. 92.

us believe that a tornado was uprooting the forests, when nobody could see a leaf on a tree moving. No! the cry of danger to the Union was raised to divert attention from their assaults upon the Constitution. It was the latter and not the former that was in danger.

Another reason, and it is a standing and continuous one, why there was no danger to the Union, consists in the fact that the South, according to their own estimate, are under bonds of \$1,500,000,000 to keep the public peace. Let them break up this Union, and their property in slaves, which they now value at this enormous sum, will not, at the end of a quarter of a century, be worth so many groats. Does anybody imagine that this Union can be dissolved without civil commotion, without revolution by arms? Sir, this is a subject inconceivably painful; but it is a possibility spoken of and sported with by others with such levity, that I am constrained to invest it with some of its appropriate solemnities. Does any one believe there can be two border nations, one founded on the principle of freedom, and the other on the basis of slavery, having a contiguous frontier of three thousand miles, and daily traversing the same waters, with immunity from war? And in such wars, who will be the eager allies of the North? Sir, there are ten thousand fugitive slaves in Canada to-day, capable of bearing arms, and their number is increasing faster than ever. They are practicing the use of fire-arms, and the *menage* of the horse. The story of their oppressions is recounted every day, in every hamlet and at every fire-side. The mothers nurse their children with milk and with vengeance together. The knowledge of a North star is penetrating farther and further into the Southern interior, and arousing new hearts to the effort of self-emancipation. A dissolution of the Union repeals the accursed act of 1850. The free soil of Canada and the British Provinces—the only free Soil there now is on the Northeastern part of this continent—is brought down to Mason and Dixon's line. We have in the Northern States a population of two hundred thousand of African descent. In case of war between the two sections, thousands of this colored race will fly to the land of bondage, swift as they ever flew from it. They will go to make desolation of the realm that once made desolation of them, and of all they held dear. Under their avenging cry, insurgents will rise up like an exhalation over all the South. There are no motives more terrible than those which urge a bondsman to his revenge. Perpetual proximity between master and slave, furnishes perpetual opportunity for retribution. Every house is an arsenal of weapons; every tool on the plantation an instrument of death. Fire and darkness are allies which nature proffers him. In this warfare, the master does not go into the battle alone; his wife and children

are at his side, whose weakness or whose beauty, in presence of an imbruted foe, may provoke the first assault. Aye, sir, in a civil or a servile war, the South will be in a more perilous condition than if every kernel of gunpowder in all the magazines of an army, just on the eve of battle, should suddenly become animated and set itself on fire. If the South wish to exhibit to the world, on a magnificent scale, the natural retribution of slavery; if they wish to realize in their own fair land, and by Hyder Ali's of their own, Burke's terrible picture of the desolation of the Carnatic, they have but one thing to do, and that is to dissolve this Union. But I do not fear any such madness will possess them. As I said before, they are under bonds of \$1,500,000,000 to keep the peace, and their wives and daughters are sureties in the bonds. All wealth that is consumable, all affection that is destructible, all chastity that is violable, are pledged for the fulfilment of their vows.

Waiving a hundred other facts and considerations, the two which I have now specified are sufficient to show that this cry of "danger to the Union" was wholly baseless and deceptive.

From another point of the compass, and from an independent series of facts, a similar moral may be drawn for future Presidential aspirants. Neither the Democratic party nor its Northern leaders had anything to gain by the Mexican war, and yet they plunged headlong into it at the dictation of the South. The Whig party, as such, always pronounced the war itself to be an aggression, and its territorial acquisitions a robbery. Yet the great body of this party voted the supplies that ratified its inception. Opposition to the war of 1812 had proved politically disastrous to many of those who made it; and it was foreseen that opposition to the Mexican war might be attended with similar results. Hence the lukewarmness of Whig opposition in Congress, and hence the voting of supplies to carry it on. Hence the pro-slavery men and the "manifest destiny" men were allowed to have their way; and so the war was continued, at an estimated expenditure, in the whole, of more than two hundred millions of dollars, and the ultimate acquisition of territory, some portion of which is already occupied by slaves, and two-thirds of which is laid open to slavery by law.

And now, what has been the effect of that war upon both the Democratic and Whig civilians, who either vigorously sustained it, or opposed to it only a feeble resistance? It made the Cæsars who have come back to rule over Rome. But for the Mexican war, Gen. Taylor would have remained a "frontier Colonel," as Mr. Webster sneeringly called him, and not even lunacy would have conceived of him for President. But for the Mexican war, General Scott, though in honor and in bravery retain-

ing his invincibility, would have lacked, to political woovers, the more potent charm of availability, and would never have been nominated. And but for the Mexican war, the shades of oblivion would soon have perfected their easy work of hiding the name of Gen. Pierce from the world forever. And now behold the civilians—Cass, Buchanan, Marey, and the rest—who stood sponsors and godfathers for that bloody deed. Defeated in 1848 by the very man whom the war they supported had raised up! Gen. Taylor discomfited only one Santa Anna in Mexico, but half a dozen at home. Look, too, at Mr. Webster, whose giant blows, had they been struck at the fitting time, might have broken the helmet and pierced the mailed armor of that Mars; yet see him thrust aside in 1848, to make room for one hero born of that war; and in 1852 hardly allowed to enter his name as a competitor against another. In 1852, also, see General Pierce, who had about as much to do with the Mexican victories as little Iulus had with the Trojan war, yet plucking the nomination from Cass, Buchanan, Marey, Douglas, and all the rest. The camp triumphs over Cabinet and Senate. The *cedant arma togæ* is read backwards. How many of these warriors will remain in 1856, and in 1860, to shoulder aside the civilians for the third and fourth time, because they were false to their duty in waging or in tolerating that war, remains to be seen. But what a righteous retribution for those civilians who, at first, might have prevented, or afterwards might have stayed, that effusion of human blood! As a specimen of poetic justice, romance or drama has nothing finer.

I have, sir, but one topic more to present, before I shall have sufficiently disobeyed and defied the Baltimore resolutions, for this time, and shall be ready to sit down. As I said before, present omens forebode ill to the cause of freedom, in this land; but a more searching analysis throws a cheering light upon our prospects.

Let us see, in the first place, why it is that the North, with almost two-thirds of the population and of the votes of the whole Union, is controlled on all questions pertaining to slavery by the other third belonging to the South. The answer is at hand. We at the North are divided into two parties—Whigs and Democrats—who balance, and in all political contests neutralize each other. Nominally, the South is divided into the same parties, but in whatever regards slavery it is undivided and a unit—indissoluble as the Siamese twins: for where you find Chang you are sure to find Eng. On tariffs, river and harbor improvements, and so forth, they carry on a feeble and somnolent warfare among themselves; but whenever the tocsin of slavery is sounded, they awaken to seize their arms, and form in solid column for a quick-step march to the point in contest. Hence, by obtaining the feeblest support from

the North—generally speaking by stealing marches upon us, while we are engrossed by our accustomed vocations—an easy triumph is won. The nominal division of parties, therefore, is very far from being the true one. The country is, and for a long time has been, for all purposes aside from the spoils of office, divided into three parties of very nearly equal numbers—the Whigs and Democrats of the North, and the Pro-Slavery party of the South—the latter, with the slightest aid, or even with acquiescence, from either of the others, being able to prevail. And this will continue to be the case, until a practical Anti-Slavery party is formed at the North, to balance this Pro-Slavery party of the South, and to do battle for liberty as they do for slavery. Such a party, in sufficient numbers to contend successfully with its antagonists, may not be immediately formed, and therefore I see before us a period of struggle and trial. But the spirit of God is on our side in this work. The laws of the moral universe, the laws of nature, the laws of population and power, are our allies, and therefore we must prevail.

Look at the amazing fact that the Southern States, with more than double the area of the Northern, after an experiment of more than sixty years of free government, have but about half the free population of the latter. I say the area of the former is more than double the area of the latter; but this is by no means the only element of their natural superiority. Their milder climate, their more fertile and easily-cultivated soil, and its happy adaptation for producing the great staples of commerce which the whole civilized world will have and are ready to pay for, gives to the South at least a two-fold advantage over the North, acre for acre, or State for State. With their super-eminent and easily-understood advantages, the Southern section of this Union might possess, and but for its slavery would to-day possess, three-fold the population of the Northern section—all free, all blessed with more abounding comforts and competence, and with all the means of embellishment, education, and universal culture. As compared with the North in all that gives individual independence or social strength, instead of being as one to two, they should be as three to one. Ohio and Kentucky, separated only by a ribbon's width of water, illustrates this problem, even to school-boys. It is slavery, and slavery alone, that has struck them down from their lofty pre-eminence, that has dwarfed their gigantic capacities, and driven them to maintain an ascendancy—ultimately worthless, and worse than worthless—by suborning Northern politicians, instead of exulting in the legitimate superiority of home-born and undecaying vigor.

And this is only the fulfilment of an eternal law which always has been, and always will be, exemplified in the history of mankind—the

law that all error is weakness; that all wickedness is dementia. By a law, fixed as gravitation, error tends to ruin, and moral wrong to imbecility. Let any individual act upon a false theory, and in that his hopes will be disappointed, and his fortunes maimed. Let a community legalize false principles, or adopt evil institutions into its organic law—which is *its* sensorium—its strength becomes faintness, and its glory turns black. False notions, or even ignorance about the laws of health, bring disease upon an individual, or epidemics upon a country. False conclusions in political economy bankrupt a city or the treasury of a nation. False metaphysical or theological dogmas cramp the faculties, vitiate the knowledge, and repress the aspirations of their possessors; and the schools or the sects that adopt them dwindle into weakness, become contemptible, and perish. God kills out error by the meanness of its results. Neither caste, primogeniture, nor hierarchy, can save it. The false notions of Aristotle, about the perfectness of the circle for motion, and the law of equilibrium for fluids, with other absurdities, kept the philosophy and inventive genius of the world in irons for two thousand years; but then they passed into everlasting contempt. False maxims in government, and false practices in political economy, have worked out the terrible problem of Ireland's ruin, sending almost two millions of her people, through disease and starvation, to the grave, or into exile, within the last ten years, and completing, by processes which make "destruction sicken," the dreadful demonstration of a crime which was begun six centuries ago, and has now passed into the Gehenna of eternal execration wherever history shall be read.

Now, as slavery is error and wickedness combined, it must incur the penalties ordained of God against both. As it corrupts domestic virtue, contravenes the natural laws of a nation's prosperity and growth, excludes and drives away those who are instinct with the love of freedom from settling within its borders, makes general education impossible, and eviscerates from the Gospel of Jesus Christ the highest and purest of its principles and precepts, it follows by a law of adamant necessity, that the body politic, which suffers it, is vulnerable in every part, and that physical and moral death besieges every gate of its citadel. Slavery assails all the laws of God broadside; and it must therefore receive His retributions broadside.

These are but specimens of the weakness which is always inflicted by error, and of the fatuity that ensues from moral wrong. They are specimens of those "Higher Laws" of God, which fulfill their destiny, whether men heed them or defy. They crush the resistent while resisting, and silence the blasphemer in mid volley.

If, the Northern States of this Union, therefore, will cherish liberty while the Southern foster slavery, the predominance of the former in political power, as well as in all other things desirable, will soon be overwhelming. Foreign annexations by the latter cannot redress the balance. They but palliate the symptoms of a distemper which is organic—as the newly-erected wing of a lazaret-house for a time dilutes the infection, which it soon sends back to aggravate the general virulence. I appeal to the friends of liberty, then, wherever they may be found, to stand fast in their integrity; for, to adopt the sentiment of Mr. Jefferson, in such a contest, there is not an attribute of the Almighty but must take part with us.

Sir, I have endeavored now to speak upon the real and true state of the Union. I have desired to ascertain towards what point of the moral compass this great vehicle, which we call Government, freighted as it is with so much of human welfare, and with the fondest hopes of the oppressed, is now moving. I have sought to determine that direction, not by the meteoric lights which are exhaled from human passion and selfishness, but by taking observation of the unchangeable luminaries of truth and duty, which shine down upon us forever from their fixed places in the skies. I have spoken no word in the spirit of a partisan or a politician; but have sought to embrace within my vision the horizon of the future as well as of the present.

The mere politician judges of events by their immediate consequences—by their relation to himself and his party. Under our Constitution, the next four years is the politician's eternity. The next election is his judgment day. The blessedness of his future consists in an anticipated share of the \$200,000,000 to be distributed from the National Treasury during the next Presidential term, and in being one of the hundred thousand men who for the same period are to be elevated into conspicuousness. But the eternity that I believe in will not end on the 4th of March, 1856. Consequences are to flow from events now passing, which are unending in their nature and their influence. Interests are at stake infinitely more important than the temporary official prominence or obscurity of a hundred thousand men—infinitely more precious than \$200,000,000, or two hundred millions of Californias, with golden Australias to boot. He only is worthy the name of statesman, he only is fit to preside over the affairs of a great nation, whose vision takes in the vast relations of cause and effect; whose judgment is determined by what must be in the future, as well as by what exists in the present, and who never erects a superstructure of Constitution or law for the protection or the enjoyment of any human interest, without laying its foundations on the law of God.